



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION 4
ATLANTA FEDERAL CENTER
61 FORSYTH STREET
ATLANTA, GEORGIA 30303-8960

SENT VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

Dr. Mark Kane Goldstein
Gainesville, Florida

Ex. 6 Personal Privacy (PP)

Dear Dr. Goldstein:

Thank you for your July 31, 2020, electronic mail correspondence to Mr. Lawrence Starfield, Principal Deputy Assistant Administrator for the Office of Enforcement and Compliance Assurance, of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Your letter was written on behalf of your constituents and fellow residents of Gainesville, Florida whom are. ~~The Gainesville community is concerned about the reports of an unexplained mass atmospheric release that occurred in May 2020. Your letter was forwarded to the EPA Region 4 office in Atlanta, Georgia, for response.~~

As stated in the press releases you identified in your correspondence, the atmospheric release was reported as methane and was identified using newly developed satellite imaging technology. The imagery identified the location of the release as just to the northeast of Gainesville, Florida. In response to the same reports, the EPA, together with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP), began to investigate the reported information to determine the source of the release. Based on our investigation, the EPA and the FDEP have determined that the release was from a natural gas compressor station located in Brooker (Bradford County), Florida. The EPA is currently investigating the cause of this methane release and will coordinate our investigation with other agencies that have authority related to a release of natural gas from a pipeline, namely, the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration. Natural gas is equated with methane since methane is its primary ingredient. The Brooker natural gas compressor station is owned by the Florida Gas Transmission Company, LLC (FGT), and operated by Energy Transfer Partners. At this time, we are still investigating the reason for the release and if there is anything that needs to be done to prevent this type of release in the future. It should be noted that gas transmission operations are also regulated by the Department of Transportation and the Pipeline Hazardous Materials Safety Administration, which may have additional requirements for the operation and reporting of natural gas transmission facilities.

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I hope this information is helpful. If you have questions or need additional information from the EPA please contact Mr. Kevin Taylor, Environmental Engineer, at (404) 562-9134 or by electronic mail at taylor.kevin@epa.gov ~~???~~

Sincerely,

Carol L. Kemker



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Director Mary S. Walker
Enforcement and Compliance Assurance

Division Regional Administrator

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